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14 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Programs Staff, Office of Special Activities
SUBJECT : Conversation with Captain Howard Skidmore, USN,
Regarding Certain JCS OXCART Clearances

1. In the course of attempting to learn from Captain Skidmore what the clearance problem was late last week with regard to Major General Henry W. Buse, USMC, DCS/Plans, on the subject of OXCART, I discovered that General Buse and Lt. General Charles H. Hayes, USMC, DCS/R&D, had both been drawn into a discussion on the generic subject of OXCART in the JCS meeting of 10 October. Skidmore said that General Hayes was cleared for OXCART in October 1962 when he was a Major General, but that he apparently had never been briefed; however, since his clearance was on the record, he was certified to General Maxwell Taylor and was permitted to attend the subject JCS meeting. General Buse, however, was asked to leave because he did not have the appropriate OXCART clearance. This situation has since then been rectified by Captain Skidmore who briefed General Buse the morning of 14 October.

2. The above is not important of itself, but it did give me an opportunity to quiz Skidmore on the nature of the JCS meeting and why it was necessary to involve these two Major Generals. Captain Skidmore told me that the subject for discussion was a memorandum to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from the Secretary of Defense, date unspecified, dealing with B-70 funding. Skidmore, who was reading from a copy of the memorandum, said that Mr. McNamara referred to the A-12 as having been in effect a substitute for the B-70, and that there was in being a plan for a service version of this aircraft known as the R-12. The letter went on to propose funding, presumably from B-70 monies, of [redacted] for six prototype aircraft and concluded with a recommendation that the Joint Chiefs concur in the allocation of a total of [redacted] which would permit the acquisition of thirty-one aircraft in all during the Fiscal Years 1963 through 1967. According to Skidmore, the paper

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NRO, Navy, JCS and USAF review(s) completed.

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Page 2

25X1

stated that the first production R-12 would be available in May of 1965 and that thereafter, beginning in January 1966, deliveries would be accomplished at the rate of two per month up through September 1966. It is unclear exactly how much of the [redacted] cited above might be acquired from existing or forecast B-70 monies, nor is it known to the writer or Captain Skidmore what decision, if any, the JCS reached at the 11 October meeting. Skidmore did mention that a copy of the McNamara letter to General Taylor was given to Dr. Fubini. There was no evidence that D/NRO had participated in the creation of the McNamara missive, but in view of the possibility that funds for the R-12 may be made available from the B-70 program rather than from new monies, it should be of interest to all of us.

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[redacted]
JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Acting Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

cc: DD/S&T

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